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# BIG TREES OF California



DO NOT REMOVE









Aladdin beheld no such towers as these "sky-scrapers" of Yosemite National Park, nor did Gulliver ever tunnel a *Sequoia* in Brobdingnag.

Wawona is the Indian name for big tree and this "Wawona" is thirty feet through and just ten times as high.

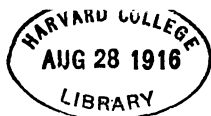
B I G T R E E S  
OF  
C A L I F O R N I A

A living thing,  
Produced too slowly ever to decay,  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed.

*William Wordsworth*

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# A Word About the Giants



THE BIG TREES, as they are popularly called, are found only in California. Their scientific name is Sequoia, in honor of Sequoyah, a Cherokee Indian, who designed an alphabet for his tribe.

There are two varieties, the *Sequoia sempervirens* or redwood, which grows in extensive forests on the ocean side of the Coast Range, and the *Sequoia gigantea*, the real Big Tree, which is found only on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, usually at an elevation of from 4500 to 7500 feet.

Both trees are evergreens, and both bear small cones about two inches long, containing little flat seeds, not unlike a parsnip seed. But the first named reproduces itself from the stump, while the other is dependent upon its seeds and grows only where these can find lodgment in the naked soil. The *sempervirens* or redwood of commerce grows in almost pure forests, while the *gigantea* stand in clusters or groups in fellowship with other conifers. It forms groves rather than forests, what is called the "Giant Forest" being only a closer succession of groves.

The redwood attains a height of 275 feet and a diameter of twenty-two feet, and extends from the head of Monterey Bay to and slightly beyond the Oregon line.

The Big Tree (*gigantea*) is the head of the family in age and size. There are specimens which tower nearly 400 feet to the sky, and one is said to slightly exceed this, while large numbers of these giants measure from seventy to ninety feet around. The largest found was thirty-five feet eight inches in diameter inside the bark.

These trees when fully grown are usually proportionate and symmetrical in girth and height. The bark is occasionally very thick and is a bright cinnamon color, soft and fibrous, while the beauty of the tree is enhanced by the flutings which traverse the trunk from base to apex.

The root system is too slight to explain the great size which the tree attains and the foliage too thin and inconspicuous to do respiratory duty. It is thought that the bark serves this purpose as well as the leaves, and that the bland and regular climate gives the tree at once long life and great girth.

Estimates of the age of the Big Trees vary from the beginning of the Christian era to a period antedating that epoch by 4000 years. The secret of their age has not yet been discovered, but the one great undisputed fact remains: that these trees in all their majesty stand here today *the oldest living things in all the world*.

These ideal trees, "nature's forest masterpiece," are thought by John Muir to have been preserved in the places where they are now found, by the topography of the mountains. The great glacial rivers swept past them and left them to our wonder and admiration.

They are descendants of trees once existing in great forests widely dispersed over the world, but which perished during the Glacial Age everywhere save in the California mountains.

The Calaveras Grove was found by a hunter in 1852; the Mariposa Grove from three to five years later.

No one who can spare the few days necessary to see one of these groves should miss the opportunity. In no other region can they be found. They are distinctly Californian.

# The Way To See the Big Trees

Contrary to the usual idea, the Big Trees of California are easily accessible, and in every case the journey itself well repays the traveler for his time. The Santa Cruz Grove is only a two-hour-and-a-half ride from San Francisco, through a beautiful spur of the Coast Range covered with pine trees. It is six miles from Santa Cruz, seventy-three from San Francisco. Tickets between Los Angeles and San Francisco are good for passage via the Big Trees without extra charge.

The Big Basin, now known as the California State Redwood Park, a grove of 3800 acres, is seven miles from Boulder Creek station and sixteen miles from Santa Cruz—a delightful drive. It was purchased by the State in 1902, to be reserved as a public park. In it are found some of the finest redwoods.

The grove in Calaveras County is reached by the Sierra Railway from Oakdale to Angels, thence by stage. The train leaves San Francisco in the morning, and passengers connect at Angels, same evening, with stage for Murphy's, remaining overnight. There is a good hotel at Murphy's called Mitchler's. The next morning's drive of fifteen miles reaches the Trees. On the verge of the grove, stands the excellent Calaveras Big Tree Grove Hotel. Six miles south is the South Park Grove, containing over 1380 trees.

One of the features of the trip to the Yosemite National Park is the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees, just beyond the southern boundary and reached by stage from the Sentinel Hotel. The Merced and Tuolumne groves are a short distance beyond the northeastern boundary and reached by auto-stage from El Portal.

A daily train for Yosemite Valley leaves San Francisco in the morning, reaching El Portal in the evening, after a delightful ride along the Merced River, the night being spent at Hotel Del Portal.

Commencing May 1st, until August 1st, daily through Pullman sleeping car service is established between San Francisco and the Yosemite, arriving at El Portal, the gateway of Yosemite, at 11:35 a. m. Auto stages leave El Portal after luncheon, reaching the Sentinel Hotel at 2:30 p. m.

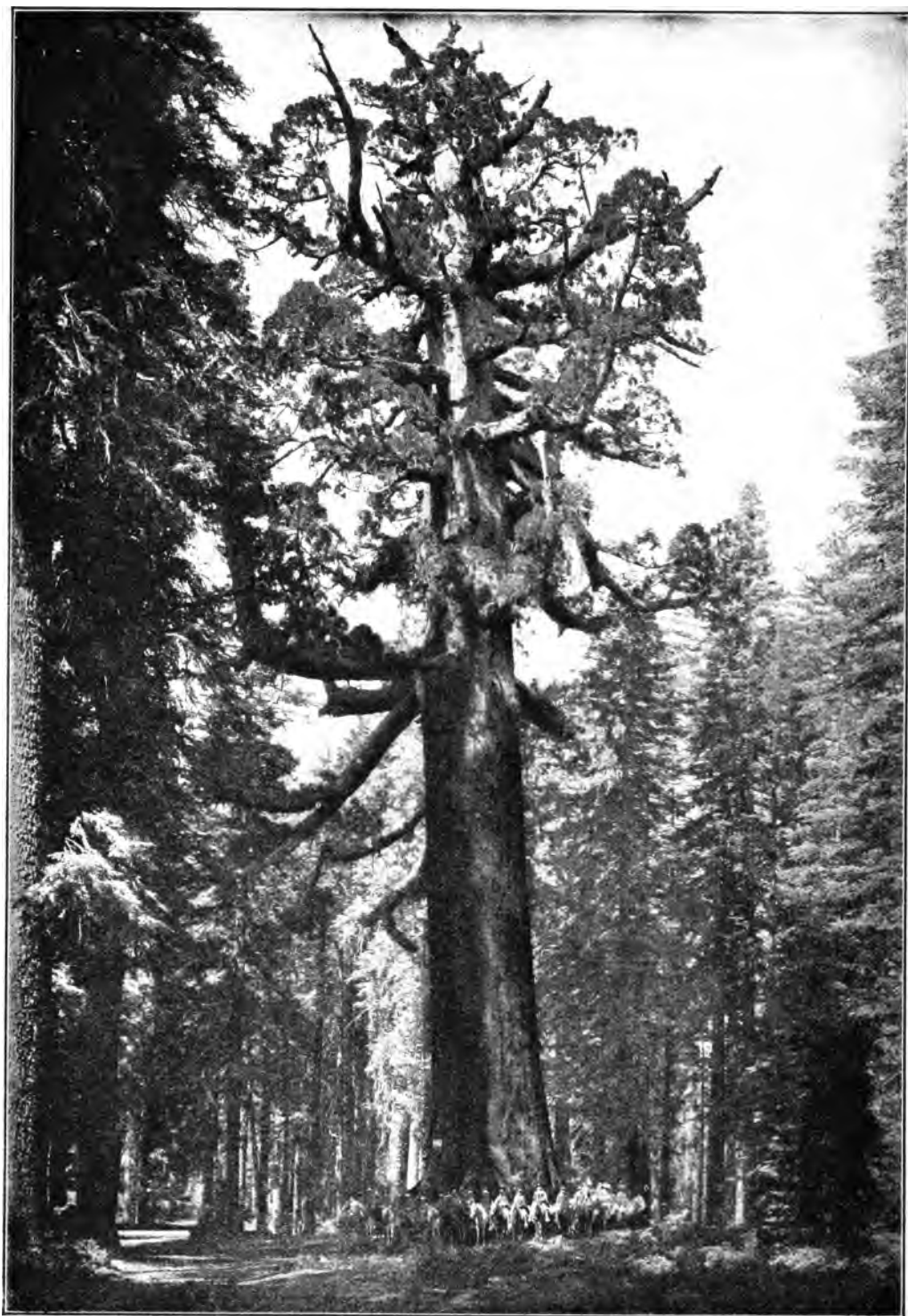
There is sleeping car service from Los Angeles every evening, connecting at Merced with the Yosemite Valley R. R. following morning for the Park.

Auto stage leaves Sentinel Hotel daily after lunch for the Mariposa Grove, arriving at the Wawona Hotel in time for dinner. The Trees are visited early the following morning, passengers returning to Wawona for lunch and arriving at the Sentinel Hotel or El Portal the evening of the same day if desired. It is advisable to remain over and take a full day for the Trees which will involve no extra charge for stage.

The General Grant National Park is reached via the Southern Pacific to Sanger, thence by auto-stage service. At the southern entrance to the park lies Sequoia Lake where there are excellent camping grounds.

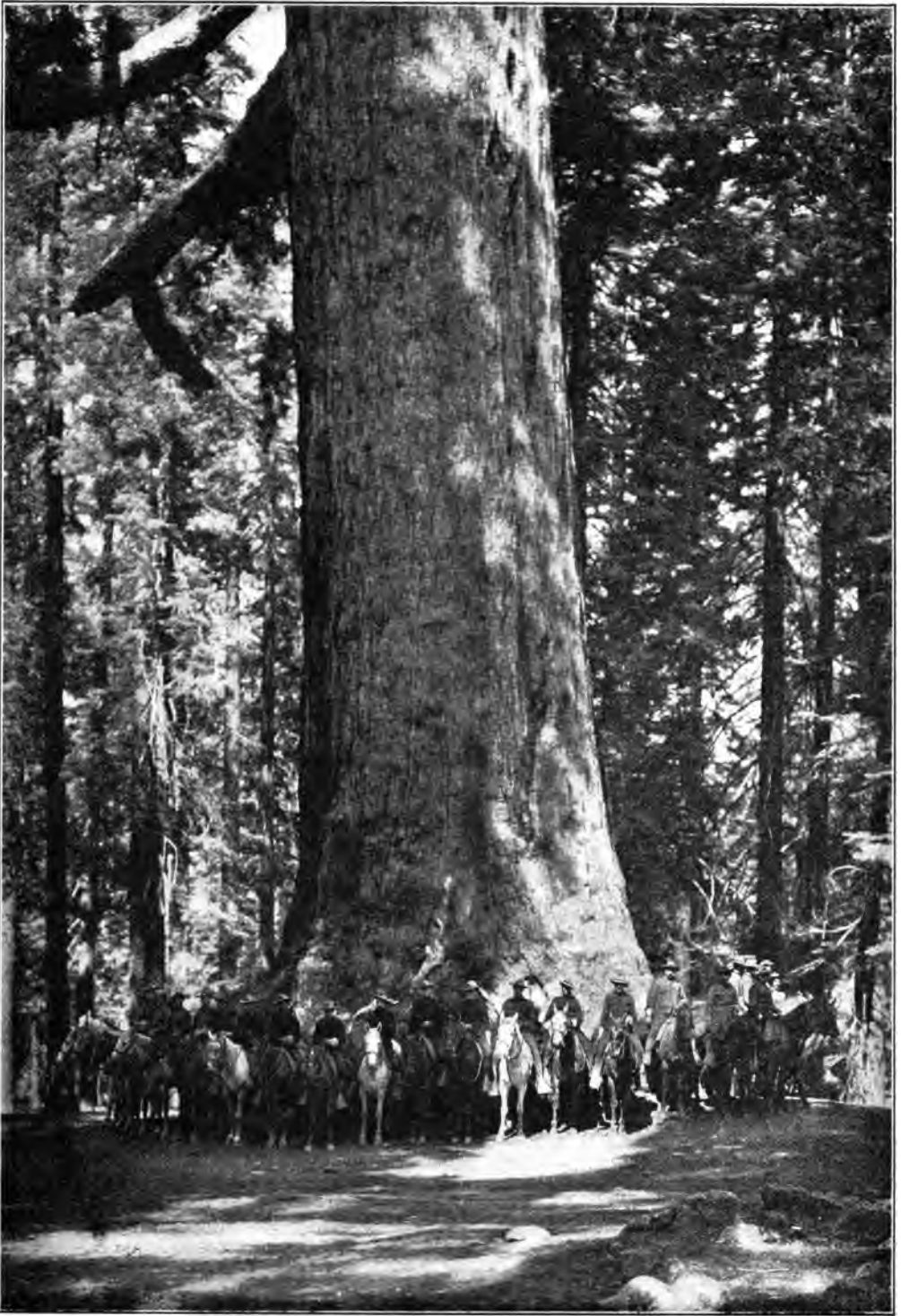
The California Grove is reached by rail (Southern Pacific San Joaquin Valley line) to Visalia, thence electric line to Lemon Cove where arrangements can be made for horses or stage beyond. The time from Lemon Cove is six hours. A camp is maintained at Juanita Meadows. There is good fishing in the Kaweah River. This grove lies in the saddle between Grant National Park and the Giant Forest and is a discovery of recent years. From July to mid-September the air of this whole big tree belt is perfect.

Giant Forest—service as above to Lemon Cove, where like arrangements can be made for the trip to Sierra Camp, Walter Kenney, proprietor. Season July to September.



The "Grizzly Giant,"  
Mariposa Grove,  
near Yosemite Na-  
tional Park, has a  
*girth of 91 feet at the  
level of the ground.*

It differs from most  
Sequoias in the size  
of its branches, the  
first, 125 feet up,  
being twenty feet  
around.



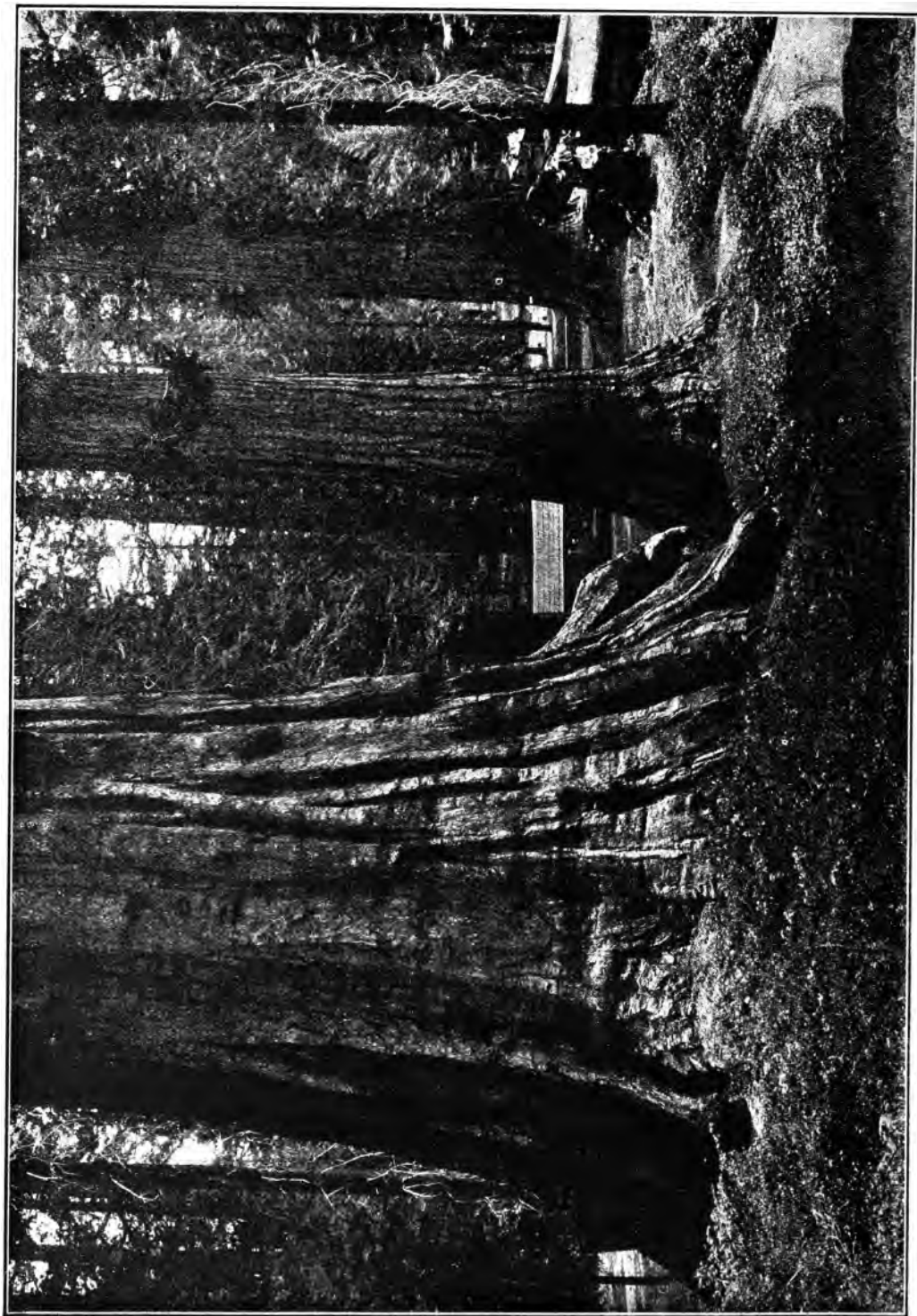
The old "Grizzly Giant" represents a solitary survivor of his immediate kin, or grew apart in "the solitude of his own originality."

John Muir thinks this Sequoia is a mature tree, verging to old age. It still ripens its cones with great regularity.

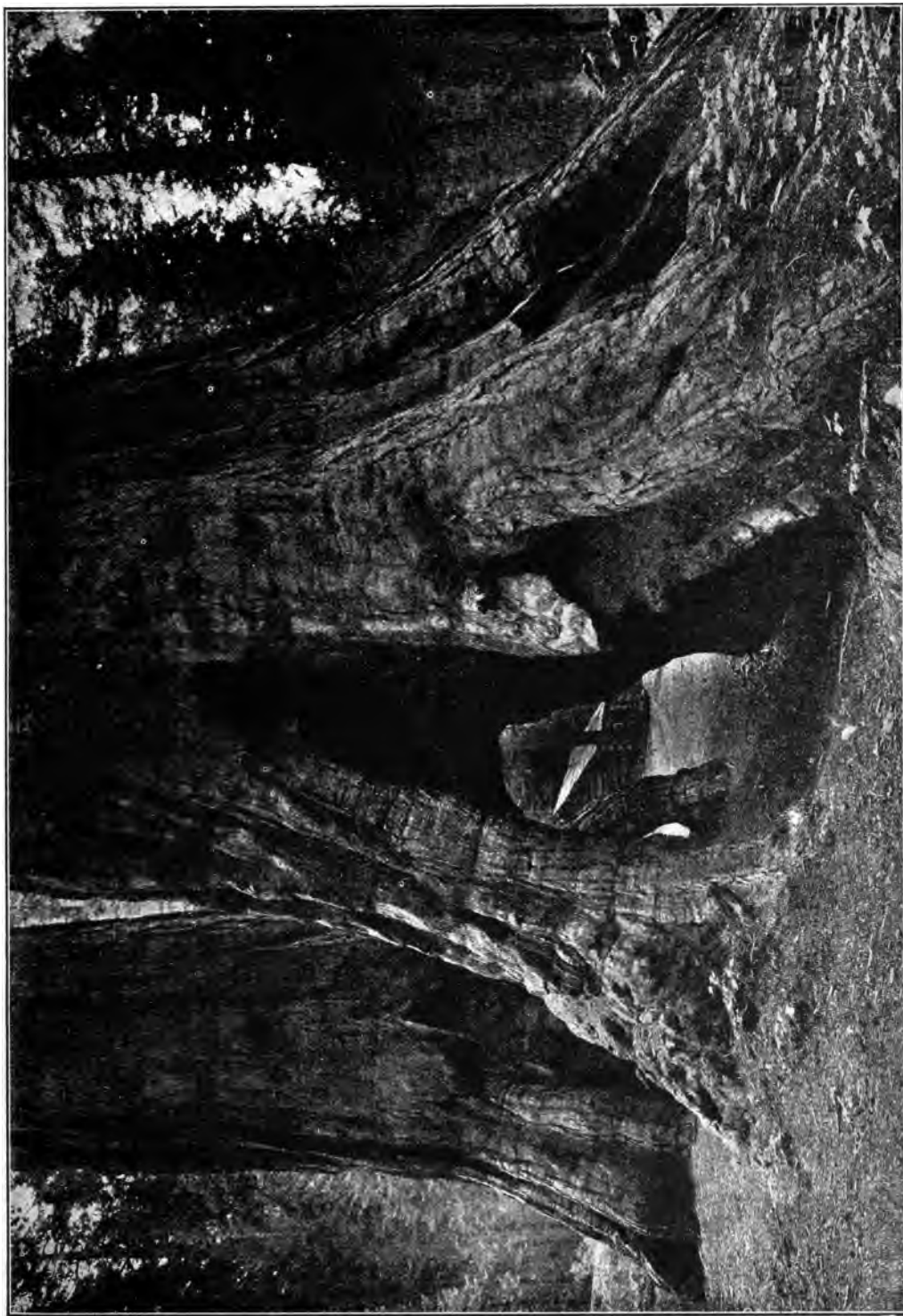


Often well buttressed, the Sequoia as frequently shows no supporting roots, and actually penetrates the earth but a little way.

King, the geologist, thought that "the vast respiring power, the atmosphere, the bland, regular climate" gave the tree its long life.



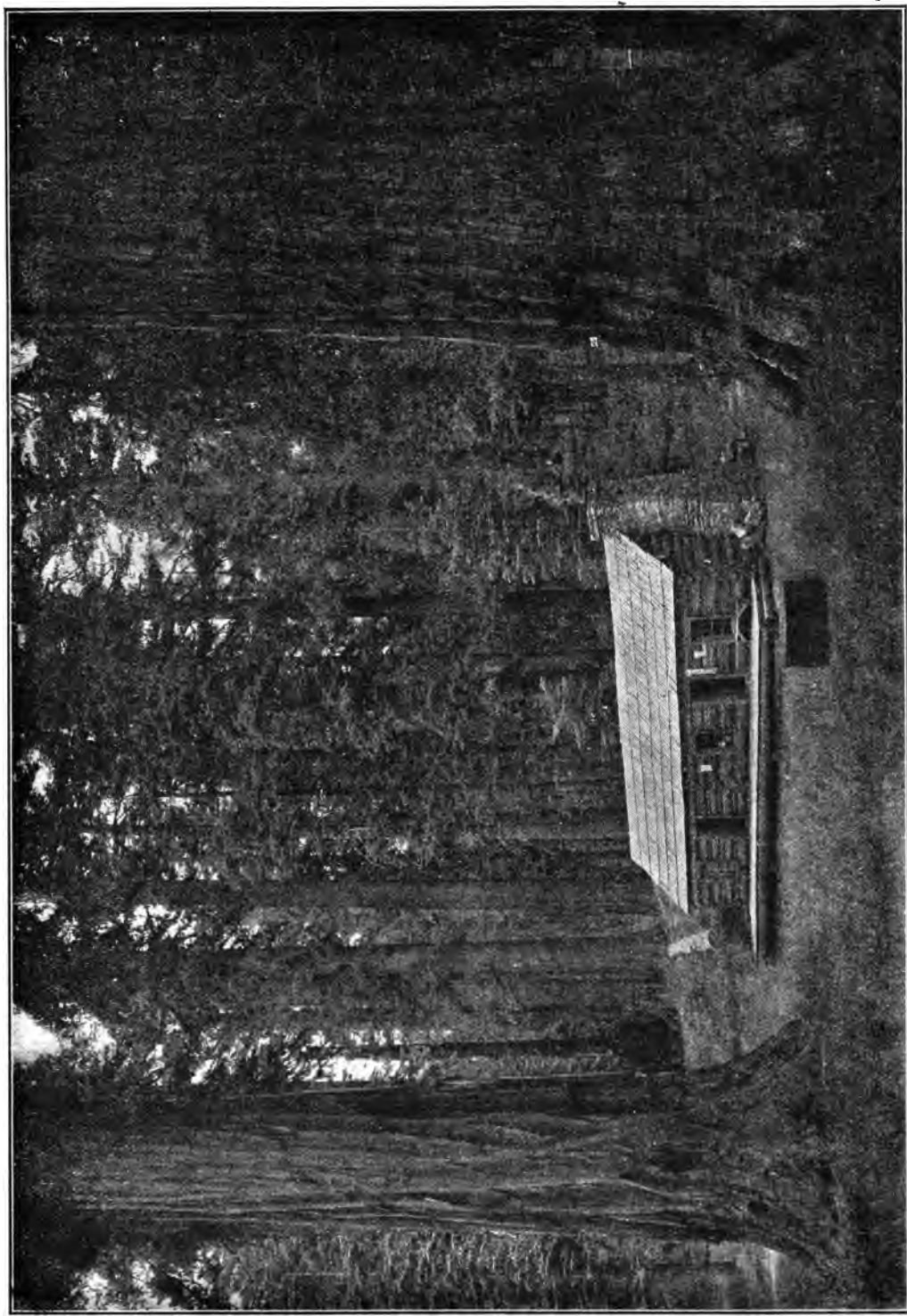
Here is both a natural and an abnormal growth. The one in the middle distance shows a buttress at once fine and strong.



*This tree probably protected itself after the fire which burned the its center, by an out-  
rigger expansion of its root system.*



*How small and squat  
the cabin looks! Yet  
seventy-five people  
can dine in it at  
once. The vast size  
of the trees dwarfs  
the house.*



*"Tongues in trees,"  
said Shakespeare.  
What stirring stories  
could these ancients  
tell from their five  
thousand years of  
world watching.*

These trees were living towers when Cheops dreamed of building pyramids, and the hosts of Pharaoh perished in the Red Sea.

Three score and ten years make up the life of man—seventy years bring the Semites to a man's maturity.





The fallen Sequoia does not decay. Insects do not attack it. Trees that have lain 400 years are found sound in fibre and *clear in color*.

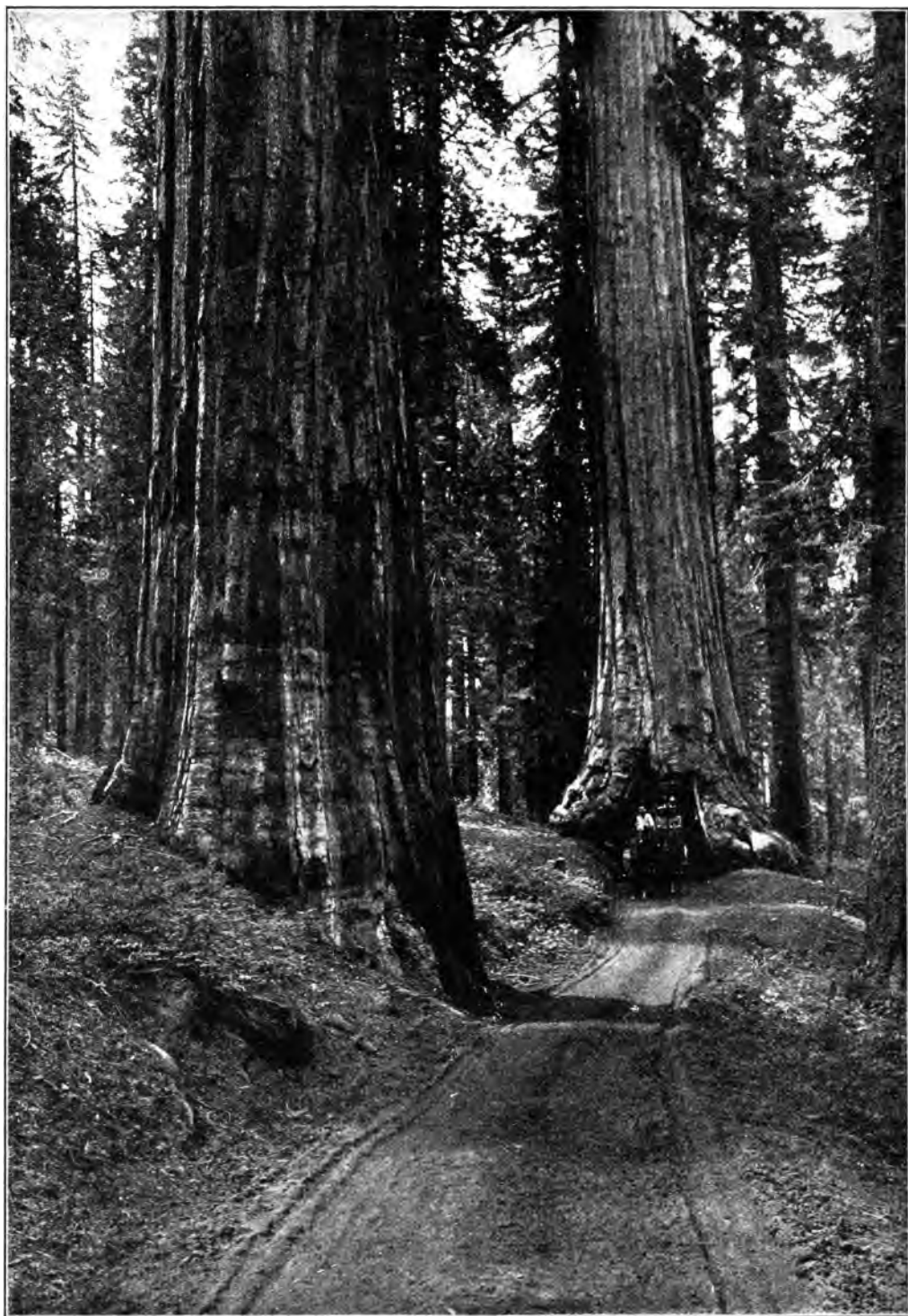
The species show no signs of suffering or degeneracy. Kept from fire and storm, who could fix a limit to their unexampled life?



A box big enough to comfortably contain the Atlantic liner "Lusitania" could be made from one tree, with wood to spare.

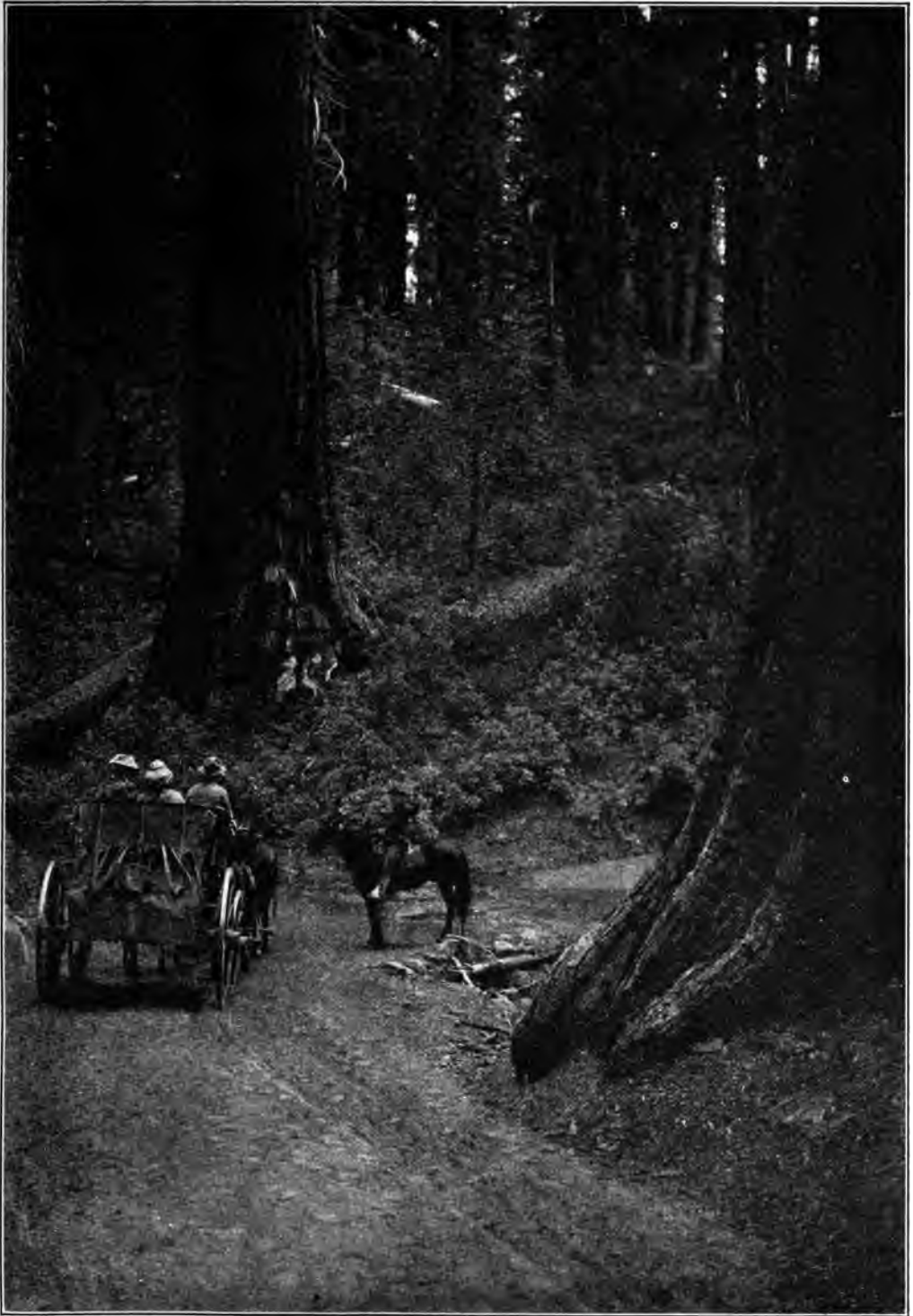
Once widely dispersed, since the age of ice they are found only on the Sierra Nevada slopes, a living link that binds us to the past.





A coach and four driving through the heart of this living tree in the Mariposa Grove suggests at once its bulk and its vast vitality.

The Mariposa Grove was first discovered in 1855, but first explored and its wonders given to the world the following year.



More revered than  
were the sacred  
groves of old, these  
are patrolled by a  
troop of United  
States Cavalry.

Next to the great  
girth of these trees,  
one feels their grace,  
their symmetry, their  
sculptural beauty,  
their singular majesty.

The tree is partly buried in six feet of soil accumulated since its fall hundreds of years ago, yet the wood is sound.



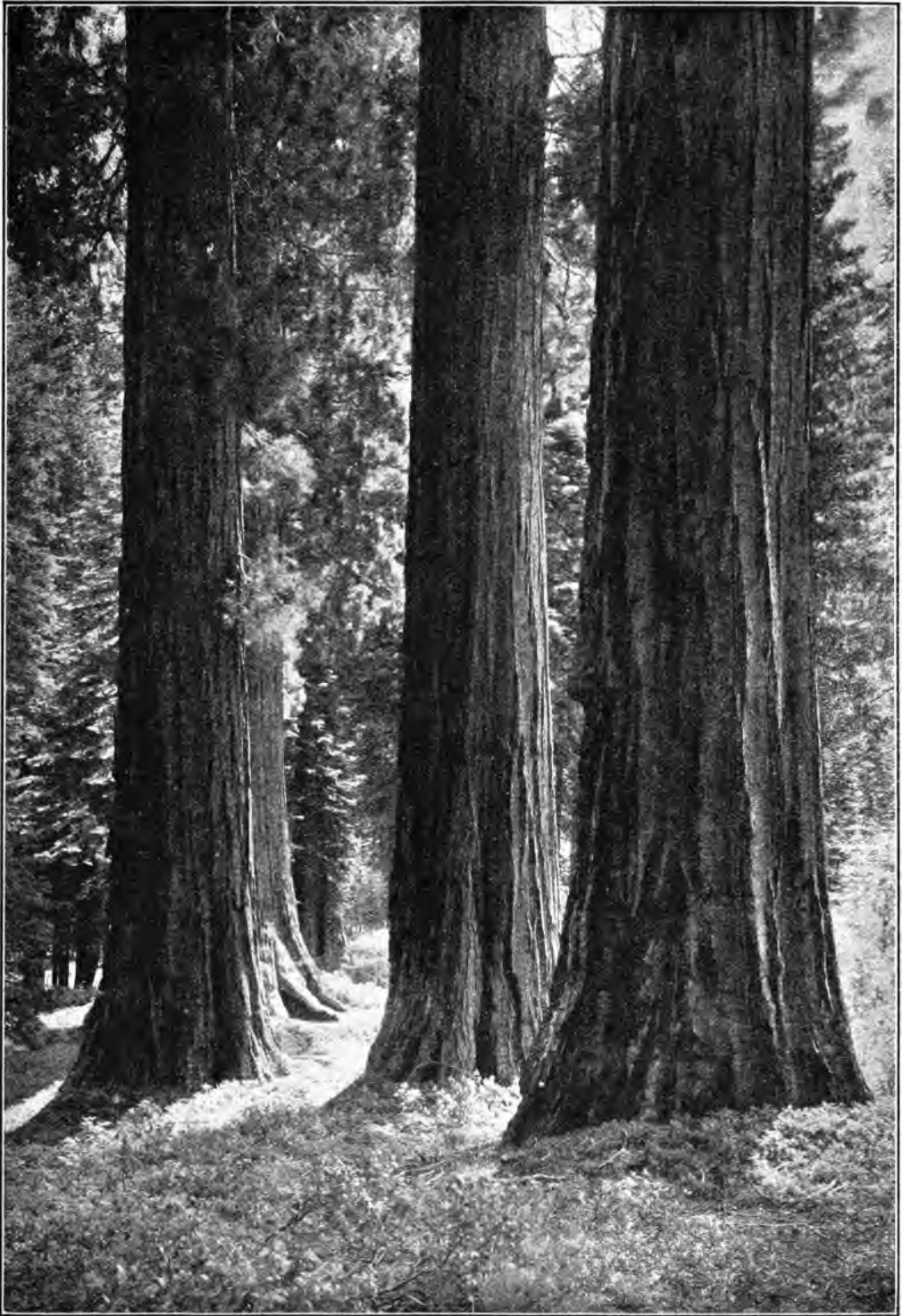
Its mighty girth furnishes a roadway for a six-horse coach, which with sixteen passengers finds ample room.

The "Fallen Mon-  
arch" of Mariposa  
Grove would supply  
twenty-four miles of  
board fence six feet  
high.



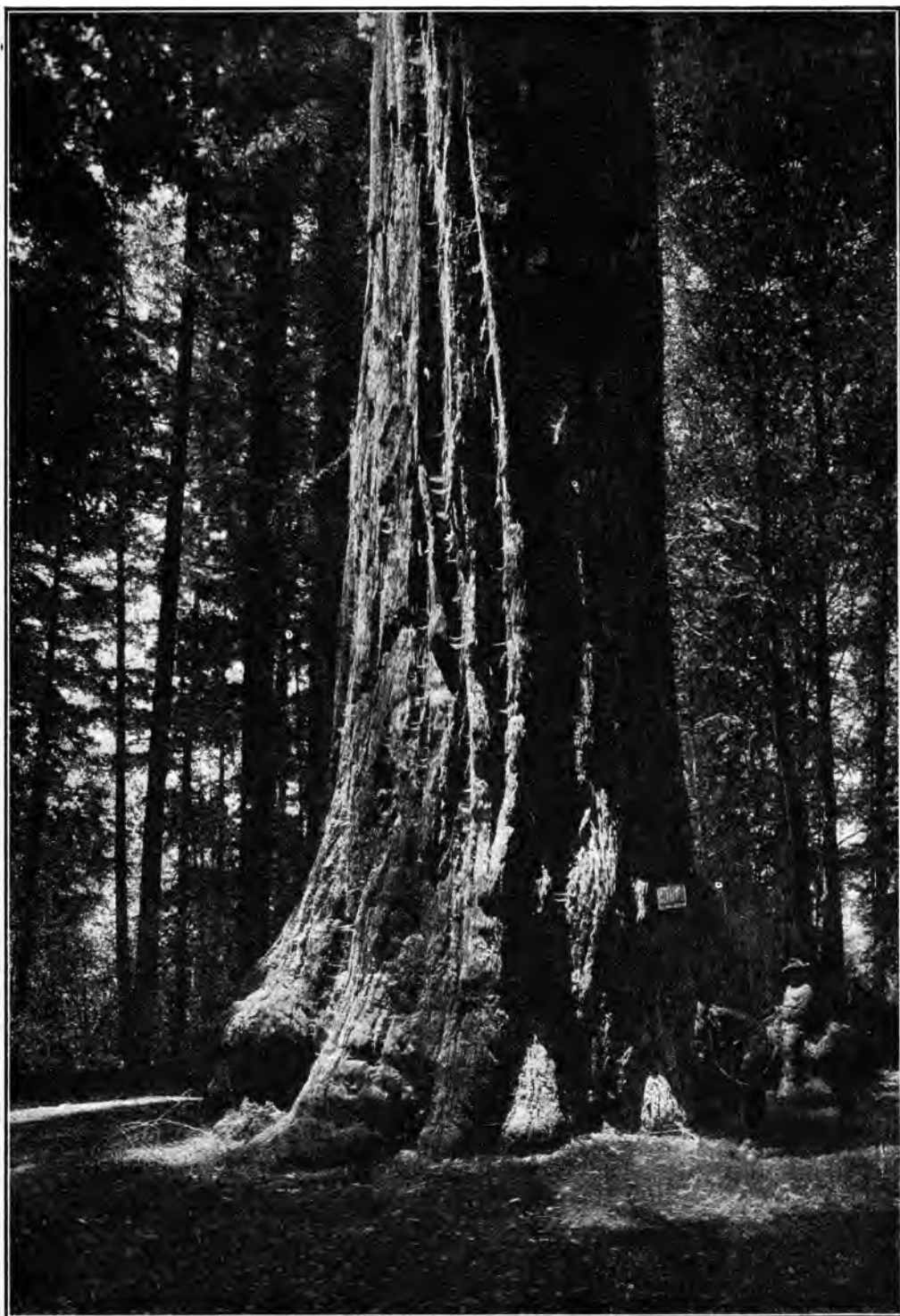
Roughly speaking it  
contains 50,000 cubic  
feet of lumber and  
weighs very nearly  
three million pounds.





Enough lumber here  
to make one telegraph  
pole forty miles high  
or to supply a line  
of poles from Kansas  
City to Chicago.

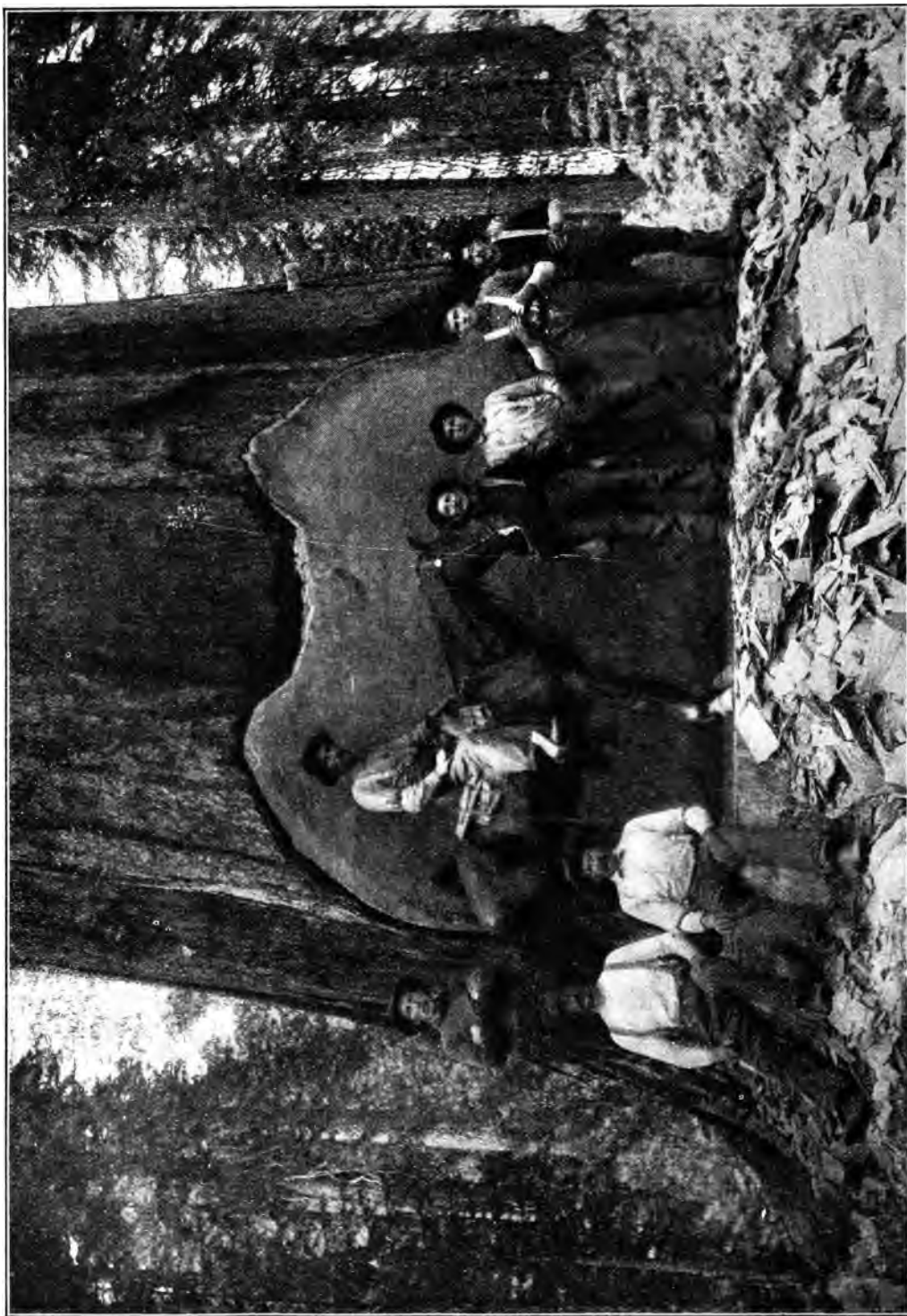
Yet the cones of this  
tree are small as a  
pullet's egg, and the  
seeds are thin and  
light. But what  
potency of life in  
them!



Above the snow in late winter, the great trees blossom like gigantic goldenrods, sowing their pollen on the winds.

Here are fine insteps, beauty of tapering trunks, richness of color in the bark, and above a mist of pale apple-green foliage.

This tree could be turned into boards enough to completely sheathe the Masonic Temple, Chicago, with one-inch planks.

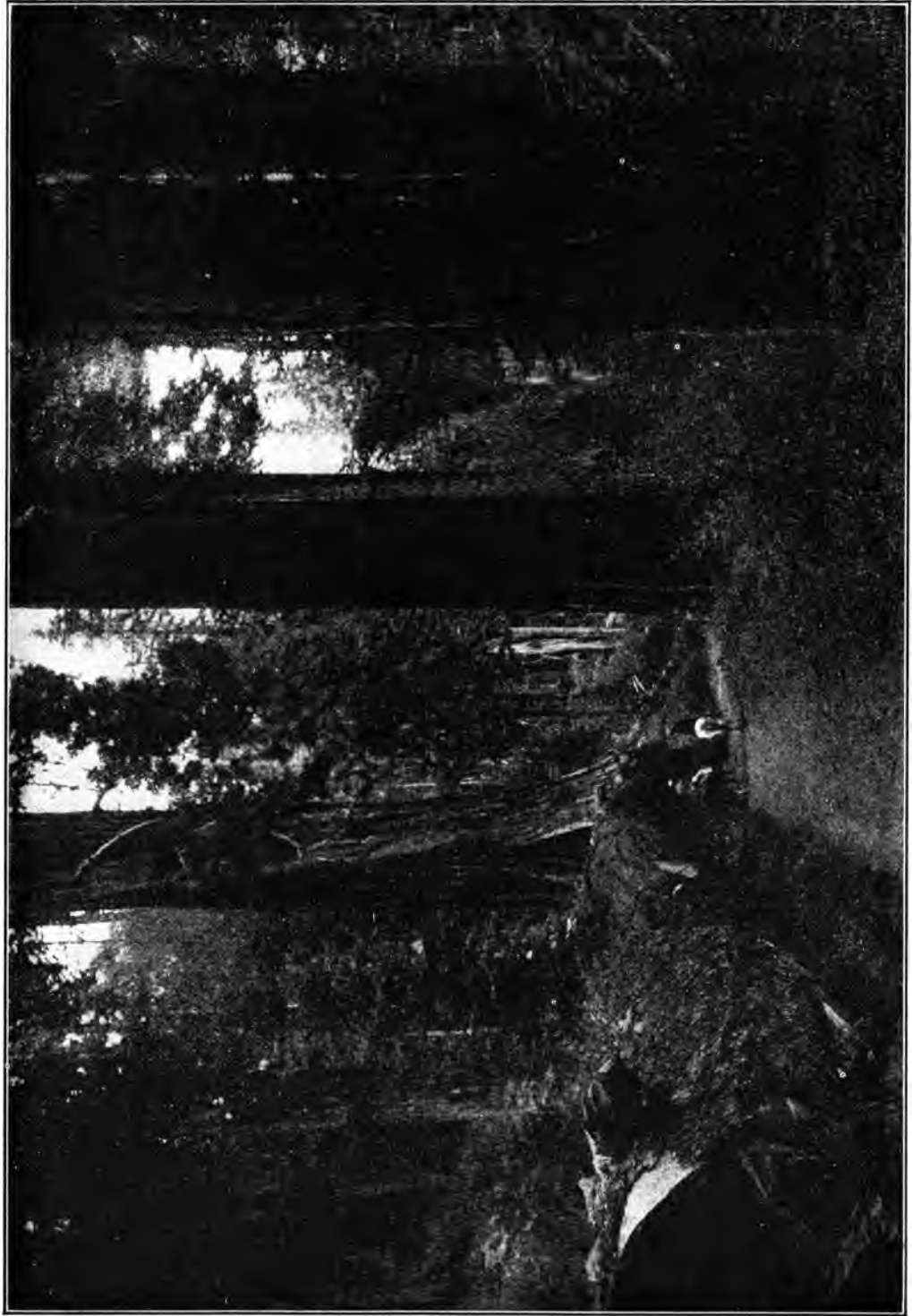


For unnumbered ages it has withstood the stress of wind and weather only to succumb at last to man the destroyer.

The "Boole" tree on Mt. "Rob Roy," is 109 feet around the base. It is in the Kings River country, where many Sequoias have been cut for lumber.

The Sierra Club of California found it is the High Sierra eight years ago. Plough trails make it unavailable for lumbermen.





Along the stage road,  
California Park,  
in the Kings River  
region. This is the  
largest of all the  
groves.

Here are probably  
20,000 mighty trees,  
old when Rome was  
young, and bidding  
fair to grow broad  
and high for a thou-  
sand years to come.

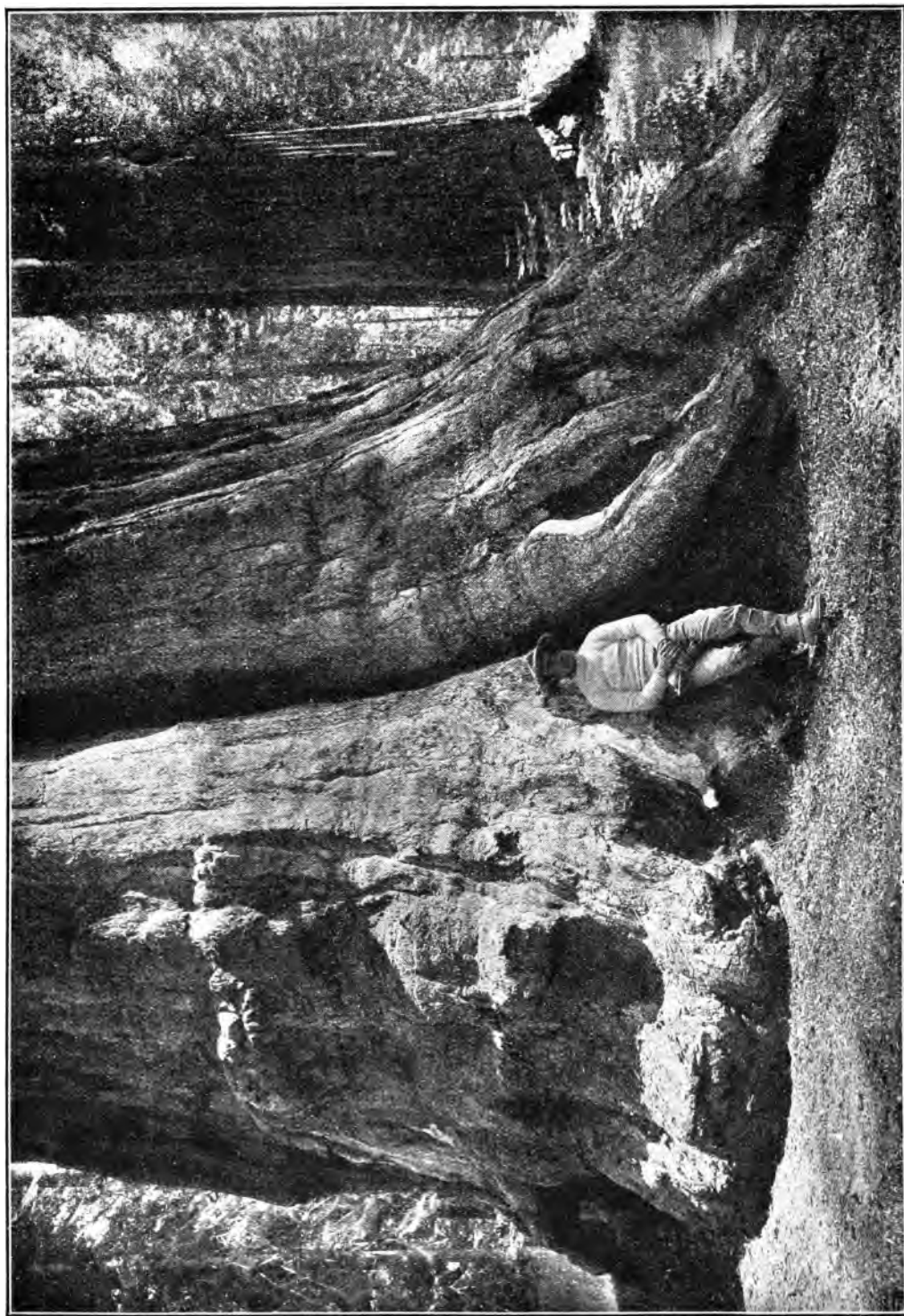


"Old Goliath" in California Park might have produced 400,000 rails of average size, or 800 miles of total length.

Abraham Lincoln, splitting 150 rails in a ten-hour day, would have been kept busy with this fallen giant for several years.



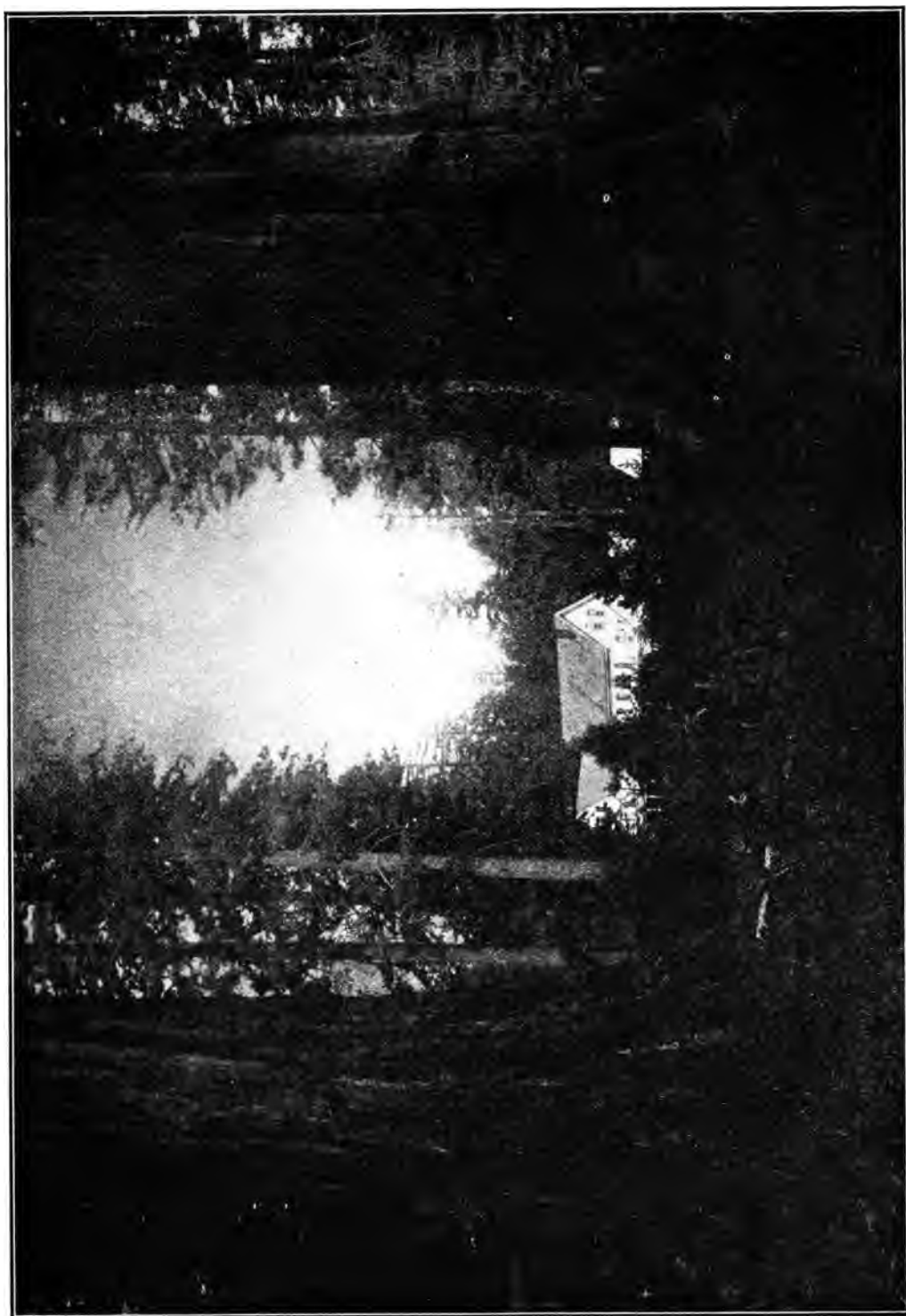
In the Giant Forest the "General Sherman" is almost an ideal tree and shows 280 feet of slowly tapering column.



It is estimated that there are in this forest 3000 trees over 300 feet high, besides a host of lesser growth.

The hotel at Calaveras Grove stands back of "Two Sentinels" each over 300 feet high and twenty odd feet in diameter.

The Calaveras Grove was discovered in the spring of 1852 by Mr. A. T. Dowd, hunter, whose story was laughed at.

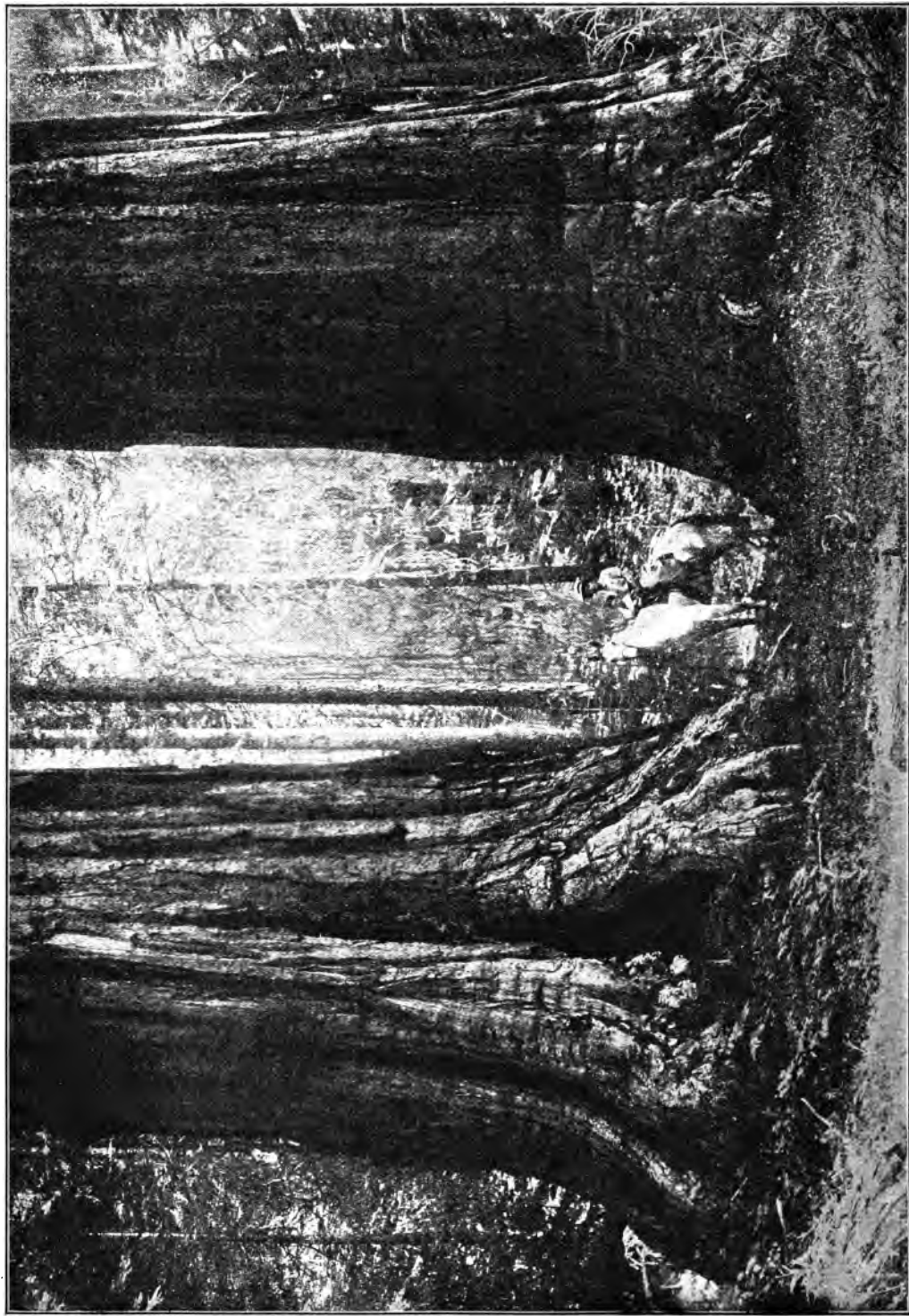


Photo, Weidner.



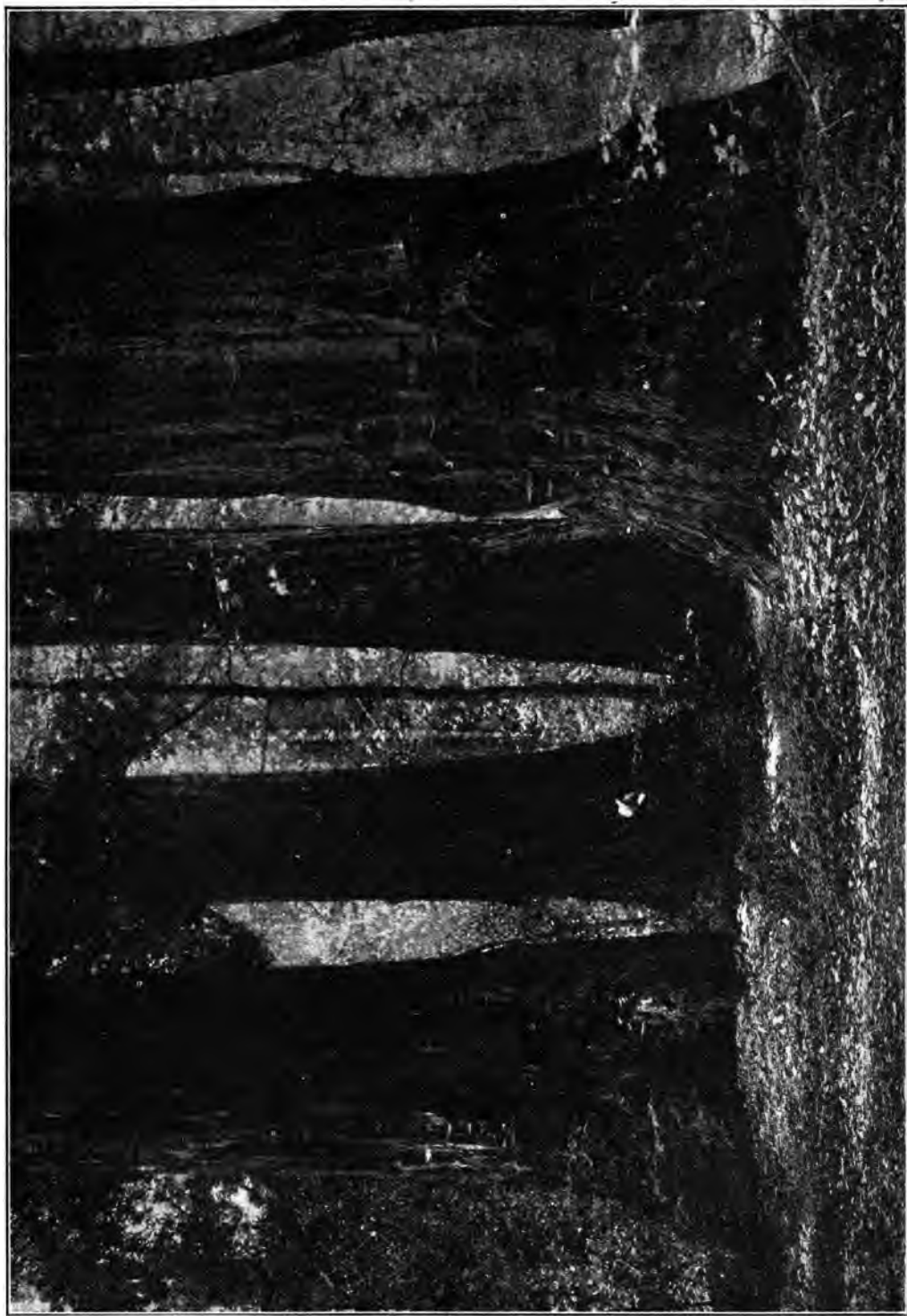
These are the lusty  
"Twins" of Calaveras  
Grove, just over 300  
feet high and about  
3000 years old.

The tree has two  
kinds of leaves, those  
on young trees and  
lower branches, and  
those on limbs that  
have borne flowers.

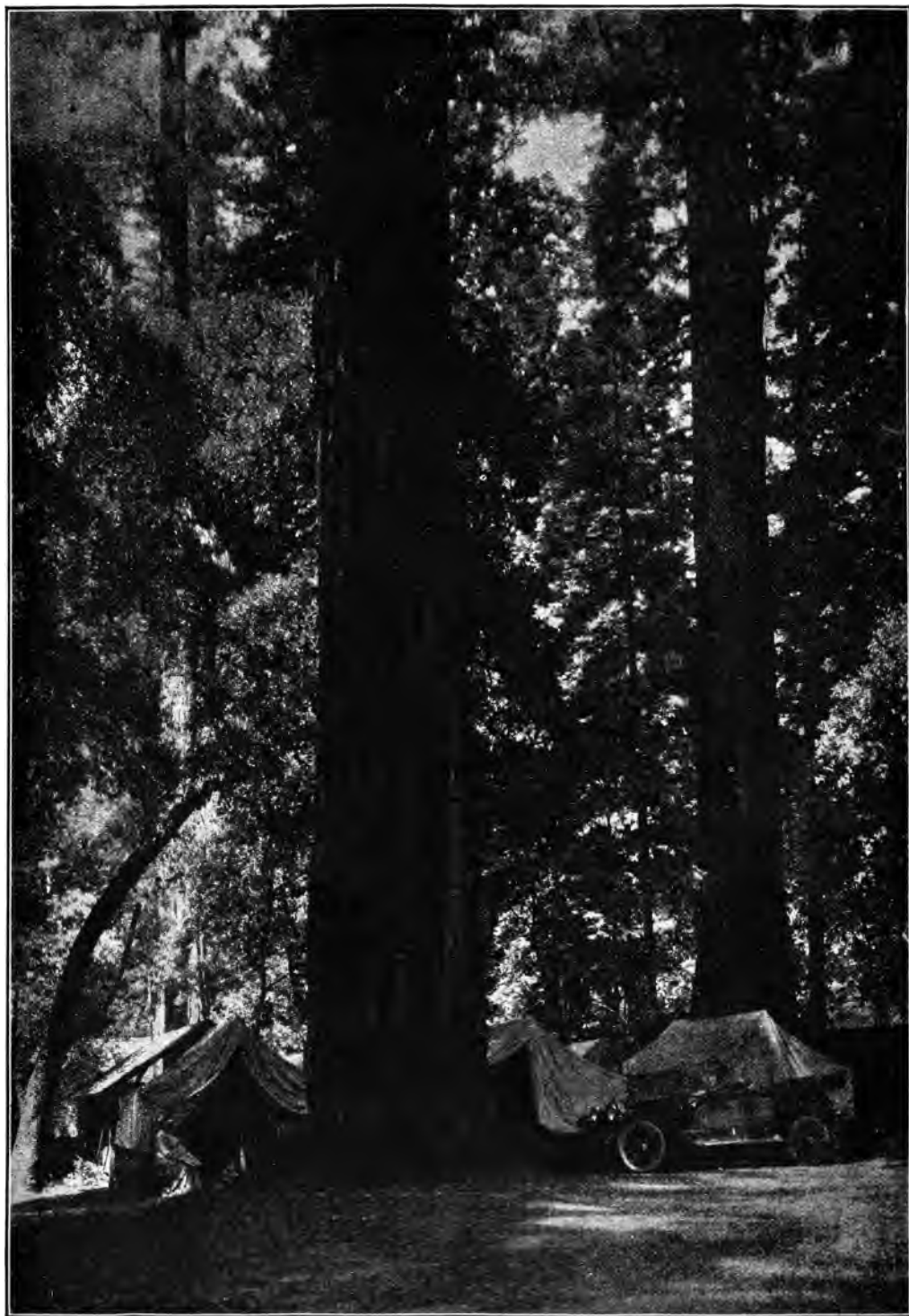


Photo, Weidner.

The Santa Cruz  
redwoods (*Sequoia  
sempervirens*) are  
cousins of the Big  
Trees of the High  
Sierra.



Almost as great in  
height and girth, they  
produce the redwood  
of commerce—lum-  
ber both useful and  
ornamental.



A canvas roof beneath the Sequoia's friendly foliage is "paradise enow" for the tourist in California State Redwood Park.

The colorful charm of this giant jungle must be seen to be believed, so rich and varied is it when played upon by the searchlight of the sun.

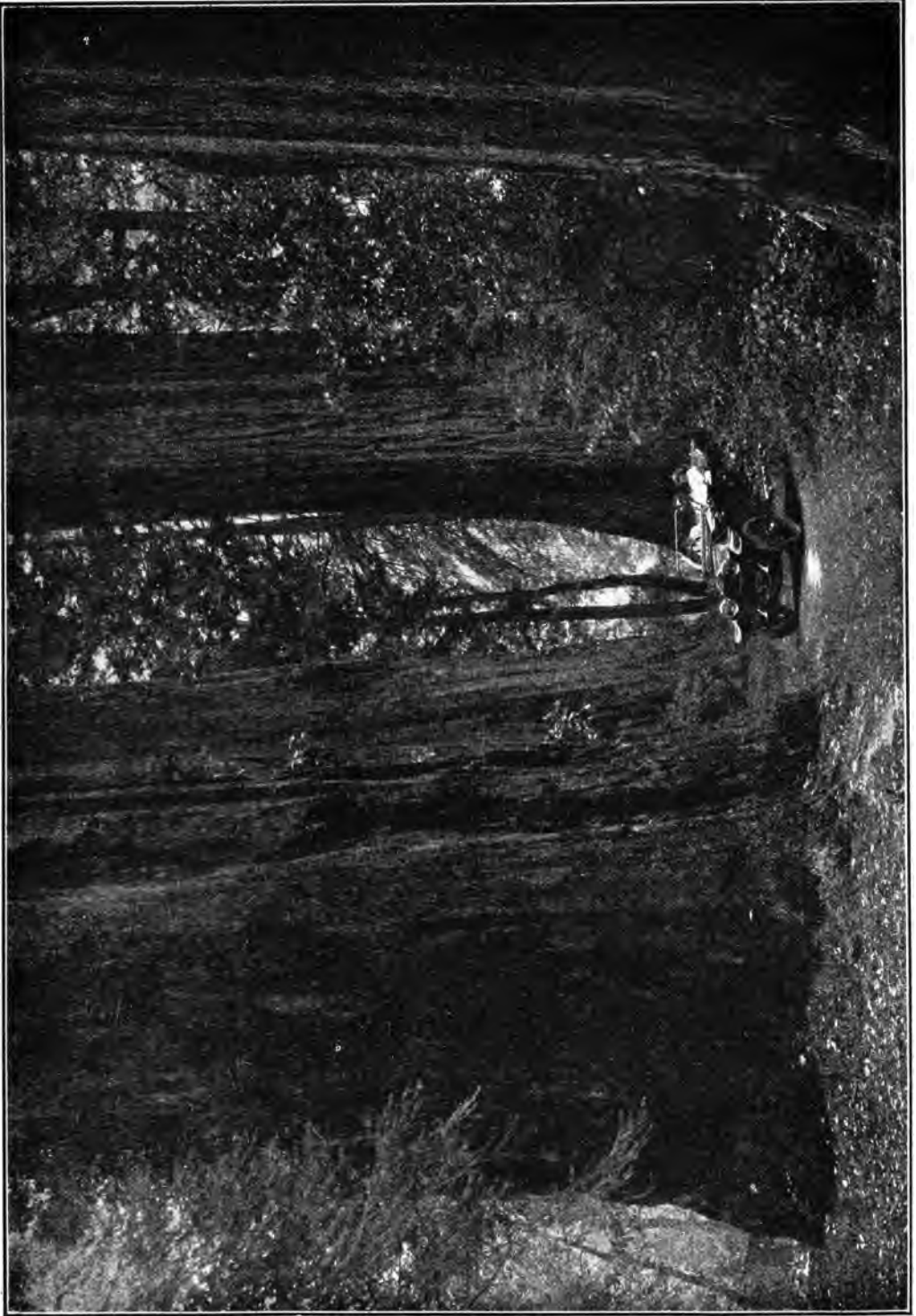


**The tree and the auto!**  
It is a far cry from  
the birth of the tree  
to the motor car. A  
gap of probably fifty  
centuries.

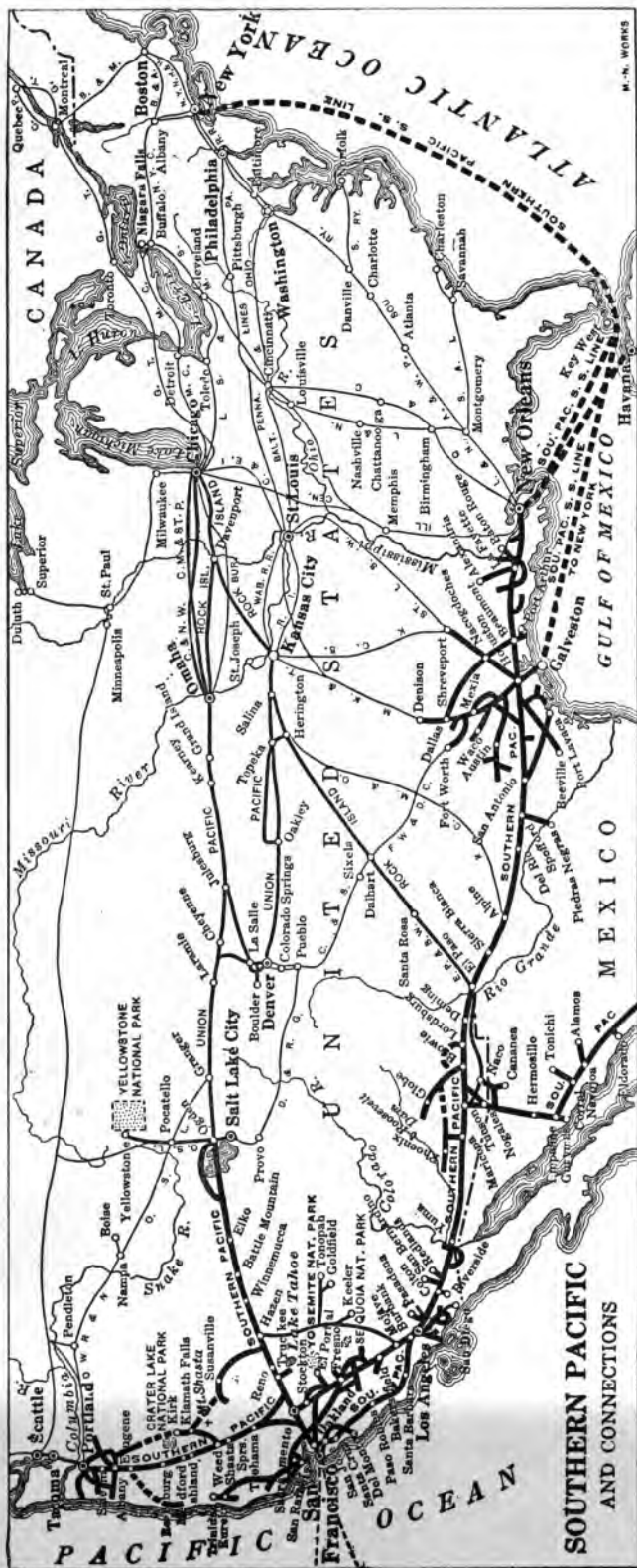
Nature's garage,  
built before Noah's  
Ark. The tree that  
was once a grizzly's  
winter den now takes  
an auto to its warm  
heart.

A cloistered aisle in  
a temple of antiquity.  
Here the sun pours  
its gold into fernlined  
chalices, and anthems  
are voiced by choirs  
of birds.

Lured by the sweet  
sorcery of woods in  
Wonderland, he  
who lingers in the  
fragrant forest of  
Santa Cruz feels that  
life is indeed worth  
living.







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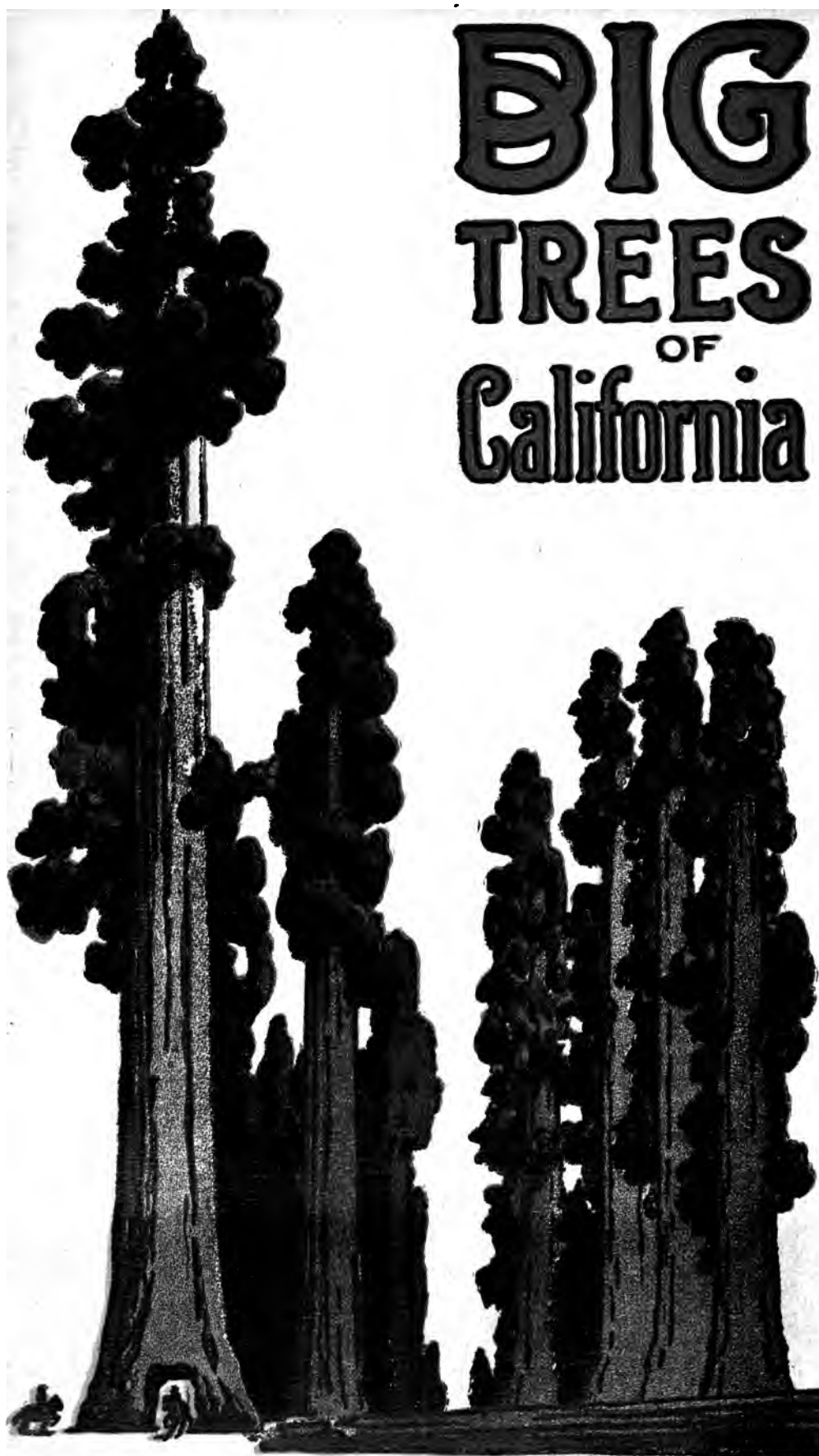


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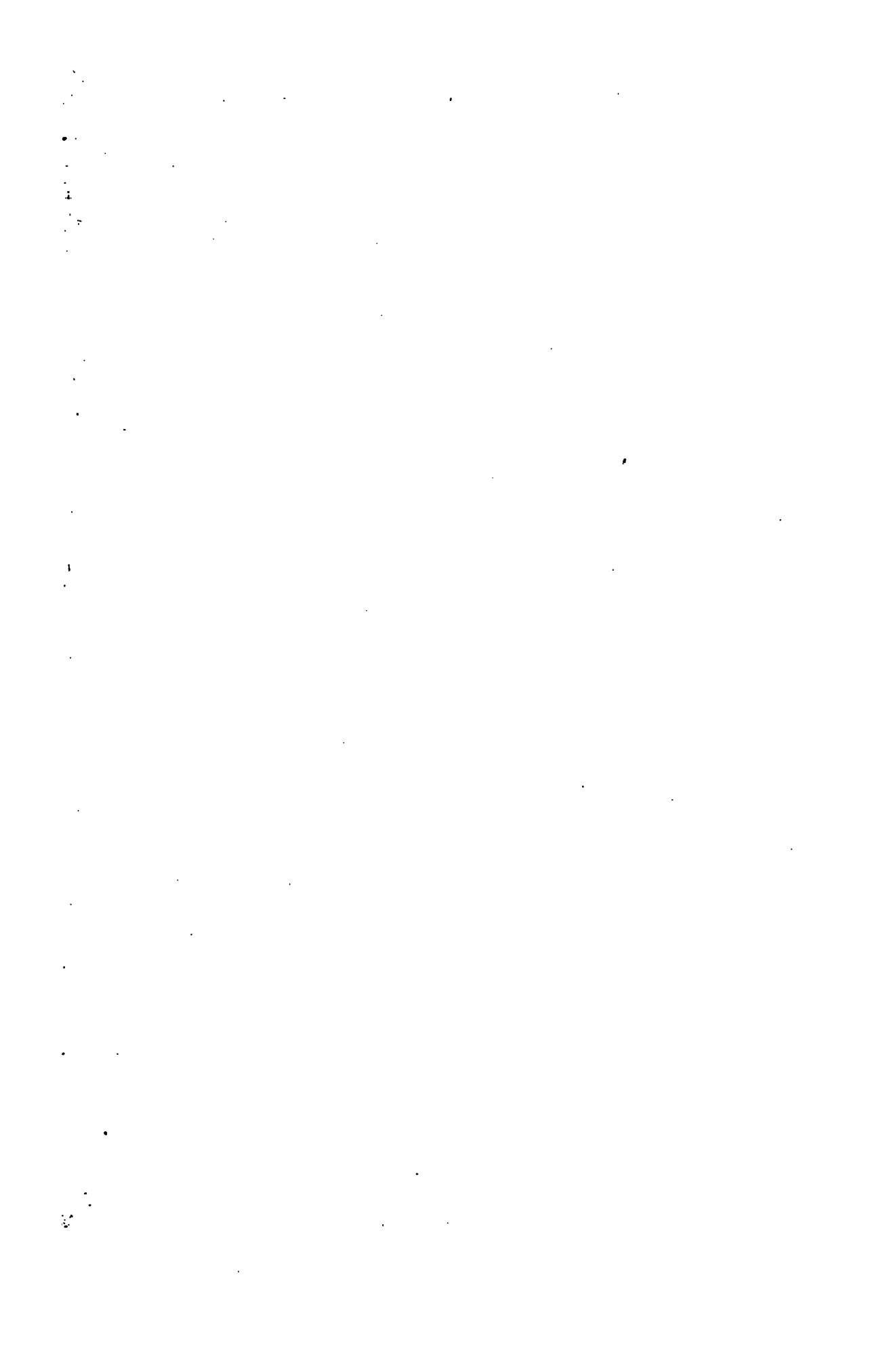


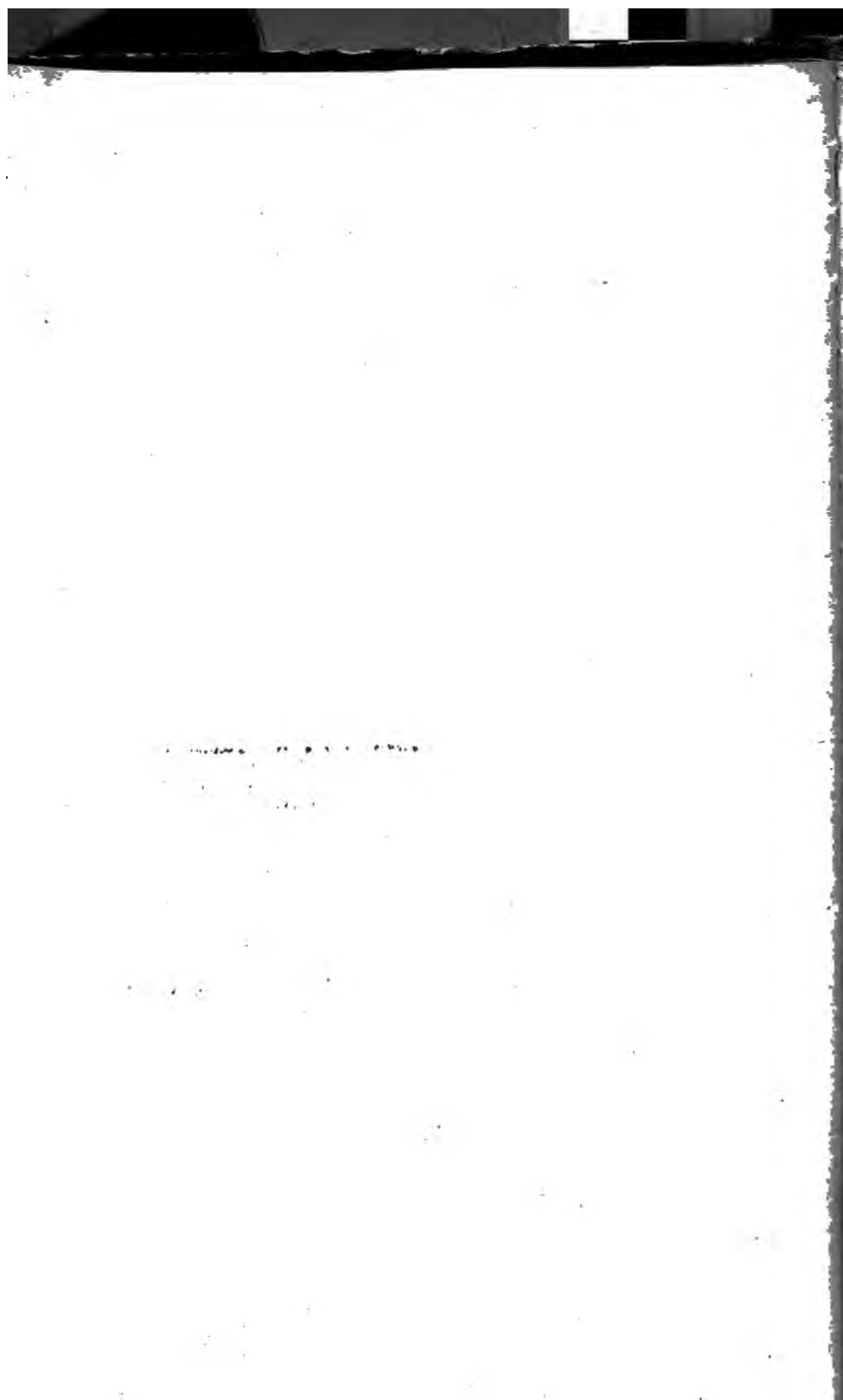


# BIG TREES OF California



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